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THE
LAST DAYS OF THE WAR IN
NORTH CAROLINA.

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THE
Last Days of the War

IN
NORTH CAROLINA.

AN ADDRESS

BY

Hon. Z. B. VANCE,

DELIVERED FEB. 23, 1885,

AT THE

THIRD ANNUAL REUNION

OF THE

Association of the Maryland Line,

AT THE

ACADEMY OF MUSIC, BALTIMORE.

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THE LAST DAYS OF THE WAR IN NORTH CAROLINA.

BY
HON. Z. B. VANCE.

The committee of your association who waited upon me, and invited me to deliver an address upon this occasion, will bear me witness how loth I was to undertake the task. The very numerous and urgent engagements which press upon a member of Congress in the closing days of its session are such as to positively forbid that care and accuracy which alone make the value of any historical address. This has been peculiarly true of myself from the time your invitation was delivered. Positively I have not had the time to do either you or myself justice; but about all that our unfortunate struggle left us Confederates was the power to oblige each other. You insisted upon my coming, and here I am.

For the want of opportunity of research, I have chosen to speak to you about the closing scenes of the war, the grand culmination of which happened in North Carolina, for the reason that most of them came within my own personal knowledge.

Perhaps no portion of that memorable struggle presents a sadder picture. Indeed, history shows nothing whatever more pathetic than the closing scenes of any great and unsuccessful struggle, the death-throes of a cause which had engaged the affections and inspired the hopes of a whole people. The philosophic student can see in such a spectacle also many important lessons in politics and in

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the study of human nature. The gradual decline of that enthusiasm which at first bore that cause on to delusive victory, sustained it at flood-tide, and strove fiercely to maintain it against the ebb; the diminished confidence of the weaker party, the abortive effort to meet superior with inferior means; that noble exaltation of the heroic spirit which strives to overcome fate itself, and smiles defiance at misfortune; that final dying away of hope and the incoming of despair; the demoralization of even good and brave men; the humiliation of heart-broken women; the reckless disregard which follows when all law, civil and military, is withdrawn, and the end of things seems to be at hand; all these exhibitions of the nature and possible conditions of a people were there, for the wonder, the pity and the instruction of the reflecting mind. In kaleidoscopic array each phase swept across the stage, as storm-clouds are driven across the sky, culminating in that moral darkness of men ungoverned by law or motive, and women acting without hope. All these things, and more, I witnessed among my own people in those unhappy times; from the day when the first company of volunteers went forth amid the plaudits of the people, as to a festival, down to that dark hour when I saw the last regiment of beardless boys, the "seed corn" of our hopes, pass through the unprotected capital of our State.

To the new generation, or even to cotemporaries far removed, the recounting of these scenes may excite only the ordinary emotions of those who read history. To us who witnessed and participated in them, the bringing of them up afresh is like lifting the face-cloth of the dead.

There is one feature of those times I will mention as most worthy of note and a phase creditable to our nature. Although war does excite, and with us did excite many evil passions—for it is both excessive law and absence of law and license to violence—yet this barbaric propensity, which was evolved by the removal of all restraint, very soon exhausted itself, and the people waited anxiously for the return of civil authority, as benighted men watch for the dawn.

From April to October, 1865, the people of North Carolina were absolutely without law, civil or military. There was not a judge on the bench, not a magistrate or sheriff, constable or any kind of civil servant or conservator of the peace to be found in the State invested with legal authority. A complete social chaos reigned; yet profound and perfect peace existed throughout our borders. The instincts of order were sublimely present; and never did any portion of the great race to which we belong give stronger proof of its capacity for self-government and its innate desire for civilization.

When the year 1865 dawned it was apparent to every intelligent observer that the Southern Confederacy was doomed. A glimpse of the situation showed that Lee was holding Richmond by a mere skirmish line, in twenty miles of trenches, on both sides of the James, against Grant with an army of 180,000 men. Wilmington and Charleston, our only available seaports, were still in our possession, but hastening to their fall. Sherman's march to the sea had been accomplished; Savannah had passed into his possession, and it had been demonstrated not only that the Confederate military forces of the Southwest were unable to stay him, but that no hostility was to be expected from the despairing people whose homes he ravaged. With 75,000 victorious troops he was preparing for his homestretch toward Richmond, driving before him the scattered detachments, fragments of garrisons of cities and towns, abandoned on his approach, and other portions of the Confederate forces, amounting to not more than 22,000 men of all arms.

In addition to this almost hopeless condition of things on the theatre of the main armies the interior and rear were harrassed and overrun by strong bodies of the enemy's cavalry, who burned and plundered in defenceless sections to their hearts' content. Nowhere was there a gleam of hope; nowhere had there come to us any inspiriting success. Everything spoke of misfortune and failure. The political situation of course sympathized with the mili-

tary. The people were utterly without hope, and what they did towards supporting the struggle was perfunctory or from a strong sense of good faith and honor. The chief motive of the more intelligent was the knowledge that energetic action could at least help us to secure better terms and avert the evils which a premature and cowardly giving up would be sure to bring upon us. This was emphatically the feeling in North Carolina as we waited for the final movement of Sherman towards our borders.

On the 1st day of February, 1865, that movement began. With irresistible force his columns began their march through the southern regions of South Carolina towards Columbia, and apparently Charlotte, North Carolina, and so on into Virginia along the track of Sherman's last great predecessor, Lord Cornwallis, in 1781. But whether it was that he feared the winter mud of the North Carolina hill country, or that he did not care to trust himself to such combinations of the Confederates as might cross his path so far in the interior, he left Lord Cornwallis' track near Winnsboro', South Carolina, and turning to the right made for Fayetteville, crossing the Catawba and the Great Peedee. His army marched in two great divisions, near a day's march apart, thus covering and devastating a wide expanse of country. With reference to this famous and infamous march, I wish to say that I hope I am too much of a man to complain of the natural and inevitable hardships, or even cruelties of war; but of the manner in which this army treated the peaceful and defenceless inhabitants in the reach of its columns all civilization should complain. There are always stragglers and desperadoes following in the wake of an army who do *some* damage to and inflict *some* outrages upon helpless citizens in spite of all the efforts of commanding officers to restrain and punish; but when a general organizes a corps of thieves and plunderers as a part of his invading army, and licenses beforehand their outrages, he and all who countenance, aid or abet, invite the execration of mankind. This peculiar arm of the military service, it is charged and believed, was

instituted by General Sherman in his invasion of the Southern States. Certain it is that the operations of his "Bummer Corps" were as regular and as unrebuked, if not as much commended for efficiency, as any other division of his army, and their atrocities are often justified or excused on the ground that "such is war."

In his own official report of his operations in Georgia he says: "We consumed the corn and fodder in the region of country thirty miles on either side of a line from Atlanta to Savannah; also the sweet potatoes, hogs, sheep and poultry, and carried off more than ten thousand horses and mules. I estimate the damage done to the State of Georgia at one hundred million dollars, at least twenty million of which inured to our benefit, and the remainder was simply waste and destruction!" The same chivalric course of warfare was continued, only worse, through South and North Carolina. The "*remainder*," delicately alluded to—that is to say, the damage done to the unresisting inhabitants over and above the seizing of necessary army supplies consisted in private houses burned, stock shot down and left to rot, bed clothes, money, watches, spoons, plate and ladies' jewelry stolen, &c., &c. A lane of desolation sixty miles wide through the heart of three great States, marked by more burnings and destruction than ever followed in the wake of the wildest cyclone that ever laid forest low! And all done not to support an invading army, but for "pure waste and destruction;" to punish the crime of rebellion, not in the persons of those who had brought these things about, but of the peaceful non-combatants, the tillers of the soil, the women and children, the aged and feeble and the poor slaves! A silver spoon was evidence of disloyalty, a ring on a lady's finger was sure proof of sympathy with rebellion, whilst a gold watch was *prima facie* evidence of most damnable guilt on the part of the wearer. These obnoxious ear-marks of treason must be seized and confiscated for private use—for such is war!

As proof that these things met the approbation of the officers of that army, hundreds of instances can be cited,

where the depredations were committed in full view of the officers. Many can be shown where they participated in the plunder; and no where has any case come under my observation or within my knowledge, in which the perpetrators were even rebuked—much less punished. In vain did the terrified people secrete their valuables upon the approach of Sherman's army; with infernal skill this corps of bummers maintained their high reputation as the most expert thieves on earth; by ransacking every conceivable place of concealment, penetrating every suspicious spot of earth with their ramrods and bayonets, searching every cellar, out house, nook and cranny.

If these failed, and they sometimes did, torture of the inhabitants was freely employed to force disclosure. Sometimes, with noble rage at their disappointment, the victims were left dead, as a warning to all others who should dare hide a jewel or a family trinket from the cupidity of a "Soldier of the Union." No doubt the stern necessity for such things caused great pain to those who inflicted them, but the Union must be restored, and how could that be done whilst a felonious gold watch or a treasonable spoon was suffered to remain in the land, giving aid and comfort to rebellion? For such is War! Are such things war, indeed? Let us see:

Eighty-four years before that time, there was a war in that same country; it was a rebellion, too, and an English nobleman led the troops of Great Britain through that same region, over much of the same route, in his efforts to subdue that rebellion. The people through whose land he marched were bitterly hostile; they shot his foraging parties, his sentinels and stragglers; they fired upon him from every wood.

He and his troops had every motive to hate and to punish those rebellious and hostile people. It so happens that the original order-book of Lord Cornwallis is in possession of the North Carolina Historical Society. I have seen and read it. Let us make a few extracts, and see what he considered *war*, and what he thought to be the duty of a civilized soldier towards non-combattants and the helpless.

“CAMP NEAR BEATTY’S FORD,”

January 28th, 1781.

“Lord Cornwallis has so often experienced the zeal and good will of the army, that he has not the smallest doubt that the officers and soldiers will most cheerfully submit to the ill conveniences that must naturally attend war, so remote from water-carriage and the magazines of the army. The supply of rum for a time will be absolutely impossible and that of meal very uncertain. It is needless to point out to the officers the necessity of preserving the strictest discipline, and of preventing the oppressed people from suffering violence by the hands from whom they are taught to look for protection!”

Now General Sherman was fighting, as he said, for the sole purpose of restoring the Union, and for making the people of the rebellious States look to the Union alone for protection; does any act or order of his anywhere indicate a similar desire of protecting the people from suffering at the hands of those whose duty it was to protect them?

Again—

“HEADQUARTERS, CANSLER’S PLANTATION,”

February 2d, 1781.

“Lord Cornwallis is highly displeased that several houses have been set on fire to-day during the march—a disgrace to the army—and he will punish with the utmost severity any person or persons who shall be found guilty of committing so disgraceful an outrage. His Lordship requests the commanding officers of the corps will endeavor to find the persons set fire to the houses this day.” Now think of the march of Sherman’s army, which could be discovered a great way off by the smoke of burning homesteads by day and the lurid glare of flames by night, from Atlanta to Savannah, from Columbia to Fayetteville, and suppose that such an order as this had been issued by its commanding officer and rigidly executed, would not the mortality have been quite equal to that of a great battle?

Arriving in Fayetteville on the 10th of January, 1865, he not only burned the Arsenal one of the finest in the United

States, which perhaps he might have properly done, but he also burned five private dwelling-houses nearby, he burned the principal printing office, that of the old "Fayetteville Observer," he burned the old Bank of North Carolina, eleven large warehouses, five cotton mills and quite a number of private dwellings in other parts of the town, whilst in the suburbs almost a clean sweep was made; in one locality nine houses were burned. Universally, houses were gutted before they were burned; and after everything portable was secured the furniture was ruthlessly destroyed—pianos, on which perhaps rebel tunes had been played—"Dixie" or "My Maryland"—disloyal bureaus, traitorous tables and chairs were cut to pieces with axes; and frequently, after all this damage fire was applied, and all consumed. Carriages and vehicles of all kinds were wantonly destroyed or burned; instances could be given of old men who had the shoes taken from their feet, the hats from their heads and clothes from their persons, their wives and children subjected to like treatment. In one instance as the marauders left they shot down a dozen cattle belonging to an old man, and left their carcasses lying in the yard. Think of that, and then remember the grievance of the Pennsylvania Dutch farmers who came in all seriousness to complain to General Longstreet, in the Gettysburg campaign, of the outrage which some of his ferocious rebels had committed upon them, *by milking their cows!* On one occasion, at Fayetteville, four gentlemen were hung up by the neck until nearly dead to force them to disclose where their valuables were hidden, and one of them was shot to death.

Again—

"HEADQUARTERS, DOBBINS HOUSE,
February 17, 1781.

"Lord Cornwallis is very sorry to be obliged to call the attention of the officers of the army to the repeated orders against plundering, and he assures the officers that if their duty to their King and country, and their feeling for humanity are not sufficient to force their obedience to them, he must, however, reluctantly make use of such powers as

the military laws have placed in his hands * * * * It is *expected* that Captains will exert themselves to keep good order and prevent plundering * * * * *Any officer who looks on with indifference and does not do his utmost to prevent shameful marauding will be considered in a more criminal light than the persons who commit these scandalous crimes, which must bring disgrace and ruin on his Majesty's service. All foraging parties will give receipts for the supplies taken by them."*

Now, taking it for granted that Lord Cornwallis, a distinguished soldier and a gentleman, is an authority on the rights of war; could there be found anywhere a more dam-natory comment upon the practices of General Sherman and his army?

Again—

“HEADQUARTERS, FREELANDS,
February 28, 1781.

Memorandum :

A watch found by the regiment of Bose. The owner may have it from the Adjutant of that regiment upon proving property.”

Another—

“SMITH'S PLANTATION,
March 1, 1781.

Brigade Orders.

* * * * A woman having been robbed of a watch, a black silk handkerchief, a gallon of peach brandy and a shirt, and as by the description, by a soldier of the guards, the camp and every man's kit is to be immediately searched for the same, by the officer of the Brigade.”

Are there any poets in the audience, or other persons in whom the imaginative faculty has been largely cultivated? If so, let me beg him to do me the favor of conceiving, if he can, and make manifest to me, the idea of a notice of a lost watch being given, in general orders, by Wm. Tecumseh Sherman, and the offer to return it on proof of property by the rebel owner! Let him imagine, if he can, the

searching of every man's kit in that army, for a stolen watch, a shirt, a black silk handkerchief and a gallon of peach brandy—because “such is war.”

Time and your patience forbids that I should further quote from this interesting record of the war of 1781. Suffice it to say that the whole policy and conduct of that British commander was such as to indicate unmistakably that he did not consider the burning of private houses, the stealing of private property, and the outraging of helpless, private citizens as *War*, but as robbery and arson. I venture to say that up to the period when that great march taught us the contrary, no humane general or civilized people in Christendom believed that “*such was war.*” Has civilization gone backward since Lord Cornwallis' day? Have arson and vulgar theft been ennobled into heroic virtues? If so, when and by whom? Has the art of discovering a poor man's hidden treasure by fraud or torture been elevated into the strategy which wins a campaign? If so, when and by whom?

No, sir, it will not do to slur over these things by a vague reference to the inevitable cruelties of war. The time is fast coming when the conduct of that campaign will be looked upon in the light of real humanity and investigated with the real historic spirit which evolves *truth*; and all the partisan songs which have been sung, or orations which subservient orators have spoken, about that great march to the sea; and all the caricatures of Southern leaders which the bitterness of a diseased sectional sentiment has inspired; and all the glamour of a great success, shall not avail to restrain the inexorable, the illuminating pen of history. Truth like charity never faileth. Whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away; but when the truth which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

Now let us contrast General Sherman with his greatest foe, likewise the greatest, certainly the most humane general of modern times, and see whether *he* regarded the

pitiless destruction of the substance of women and children and inoffensive inhabitants as legitimate war.

“HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
June 27, 1863.

“*General Order No. 73.*

“The Commanding General has observed with marked satisfaction the conduct of the troops on the march. There have, however, been instances of forgetfulness on the part of some that they have in keeping the yet unsullied reputation of this Army, and that the duties exacted of us by civilization and Christianity are not less obligatory in the country of the enemy than our own. The Commanding General considers that no greater disgrace could befall the Army, and through it our whole people, than the perpetration of barbarous outrages upon the unarmed and defenceless, and the wanton destruction of private property, that have marked the course of the enemy in our own country.
* * * * It will be remembered that we make war only upon armed men.

“R. E. LEE, *General.*”

The humanity and Christian spirit of this order was such as to challenge the admiration of foreign nations. The “London Times” commented upon it, and its American correspondent said: “The greatest surprise has been expressed to me by officers from the Austrian, Prussian and English armies, each of which has representatives here, that volunteer troops, provoked by nearly twenty-seven months of unparalleled ruthlessness and wantonness, of which their country has been the scene, should be under such control, and willing to act in harmony with the long-suffering and forbearance of President Davis and General Lee.”

To show how this order was executed, the same writer tells a story of how he witnessed with his own eyes General Lee and a surgeon of his command repairing the damage to a farmer’s fence. Col. McClure, of Philadelphia, a Union soldier himself, bears witness to the good conduct of Lee’s

ragged rebels in that famous campaign. He tells of hundreds of them coming to him and asking for a little bread and coffee, and of others who were wet and shivering "asking permission" to enter a house in which they saw a bright fire, to warm themselves until their coffee should be ready.

Hundreds of similar instances could be given, substantiated by the testimony of men on both sides, to show the splendid humanity of that great invasion. Blessed be the good God, who, if in His wisdom, He denied us success, yet gave to us and our children the rich inheritance of this great example.

Now, there is Lee's order on entering Pennsylvania, and there are the proofs referred to of the good faith with which that order was executed. Was any such humane order issued by General Sherman when he began his march through Georgia, South and North Carolina? If so, let the numberless and atrocious outrages which characterized his every step speak as to the *mala fides* with which it was executed. Let a few other things also speak. Major General Halleck, then, I believe, commander-in-chief, under the President, of the armies of the Union, on the 18th of December, 1864, dispatched as follows to General Sherman, then in Savannah: "Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by some *accident* the place may be destroyed; and if a little salt should be sown upon its site it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession." On the 24th of December, 1864, General Sherman made the following answer: "I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and don't think 'salt' will be necessary. When I move the 15th Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them naturally into Charleston first, and if you have watched the history of that corps you will have remarked that they generally do their work up pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her. * * * I look upon Columbia as quite as bad as

Charleston!" Therefore Columbia was burned to ashes. And though he knew what was in store for South Carolina, so horrible that even he trembled, he took no steps to avert it. for he felt that she deserved it all. Did she, indeed? What crime had she committed that placed her outside the protection of the law of civilized nations? What unjust and barbarous or brutal conduct had she been guilty of to bring her within the exceptions laid down by the writers on the laws of war as authorizing extraordinary severity of punishment? They* are not even imputed to her. South Carolina's crime and the crime of all the seceding States was that of a construction of the constitution of the United States differing from that of General Sherman and the 15th Corps—which "always did up its work pretty well."

Happily, the Divine Goodness has made the powers of recuperation even superior to those of destruction; and though their overthrow was so complete that "salt" was not needed as the type of utter desolation, yet Marietta and Atlanta are thriving and prosperous cities; and Columbia has once more resumed her poetic name—the city of roses; and but recently I read, with satisfaction, that the good old town of Fayetteville is fast rebuilding her factories, and boasts of having but lately recovered much of her ancient trade.

I mean further to contrast this march to the sea with the opinions of the great American writer on international law, Chancellor Kent. Treating of plunder on land and depredations on private property. He says: (part 1, Sec. 5,) "Such conduct has been condemned in all ages, by the wise and the virtuous, and it is usually punished severely by those commanders of disciplined troops who have studied war as a science, and are animated by a sense of duty or love of fame. * * * * If the conqueror goes beyond these limits wantonly, or when it is not clearly indispensable to the just purposes of war, and seizes private property of pacific persons for the sake of gain, and destroys private dwellings or public edifices devoted to civil pur-

poses only; or makes war upon monuments of art and models of taste, he violates the modern usages of war, and is sure to meet with indignant resentment, and to be held up to the general scorn and detestation of the world." If Kent, although studied by General Sherman at West Point, be not a sufficient authority for his condemnation, let us try him by the opinion of Major-General Halleck—the "salt" suggester above referred to, and see what he says in his cooler moments concerning the rights of unarmed inhabitants during war.

In his *International Law and Laws of War*, published in 1861, treating of the ancient practice which made all private property of the enemy subject to confiscation, he says: "But the modern usage is not to touch private property on land without making compensation, except in certain specified cases. These exceptions may be stated under three general heads: first, confiscations or seizures by way of penalty for military offenses; second, forced contributions for the support of the invading army, or as an indemnity for the expenses of maintaining order and affording protection to the conquered inhabitants; and third, property taken on the field of battle, or in storming a fortress or town." Again the same author says (Chap. 19, page 451): "The evils resulting from irregular requisitions and foraging for the ordinary supplies of an army are so very great and so generally admitted, that it has become a recognized maxim of war, that the commanding officer who permits indiscriminate pillage, and allows the taking of private property without a strict accountability * * * fails in his duty to his own government, and violates the usages of modern warfare. It is sometimes alleged, in excuse for such conduct, that the general is unable to restrain his troops; but in the eye of the law there is no excuse, for he who cannot preserve order in his army, has no right to command it."

Once more, let us bring this general to the test of the code prepared for the government of the armies of the United States by Frances Lieber—

Section 20 reads as follows: "Private property, unless forfeited by crimes or by offenses of the owner against the safety of the army or the dignity of the United States, and after due conviction of the owner by court martial, can be seized only by way of military necessity for the support or other benefit of the army or of the United States." Section 24 reads: "All wanton violence committed against persons in the invaded country; all destruction of property not commanded by the authorized officer; all robbery; all pillage or sacking, even after taking a place by main force; all rape, wounding, maiming or killing of such inhabitants, are prohibited under the penalty of death, or such other severe punishment as may seem adequate for the gravity of the offense." Section 27 reads as follows: "Crimes punishable by all penal codes, such as arson, murder, maiming, assaults, highway robbery, theft, burglary, fraud, forgery, and rape, if committed by an American soldier in a hostile country against its inhabitants, are not only punishable as at home, but in all cases in which death is not inflicted, the severer punishment shall be preferred, because the criminal has, as far as in him lay, prostituted the power conferred on a man of arms, and prostrated the dignity of the United States."

One more short quotation from this code prepared by Dr. Lieber I will give, not so much for its authority as because it is so eminently ludicrous in the light of the way in which it was observed by Sherman's bummers. Listen—Section 40. "It is the usage in European armies that money and all valuables on the person of a prisoner, such as watches or jewelry, as well as extra clothing belong to the captor; but it distinguishes the army of the United States that the appropriation of such articles or money is considered dishonorable, and not suffered by the officers.' Ah!

To the same effect are all the great writers on public law for more than two centuries back. Wolsey, Vattel, Gro-tiers, Puffendorf, Polson, Jomini and the rest of them, almost without exception. In fact every one of any note

condemns in unmistakable terms the destruction and indiscriminate pillaging of private property of unarmed people in a time of war. Even the followers of Mahomet, cruel and blood-thirsty as they were, recognized to its full extent the justice and propriety of these principles. The Caliph, Abubekr, in 634, when sending forth his generals to the conquest of Syria, gave them instructions which General Sherman cannot read without a sense of shame. Abubekr, an old man, accompanied the army on foot on its first day's march, and when the blushing leaders attempted to dismount, says the historian, the Caliph removed their scruples by a declaration that those who rode and those who walked in the service of religion were equally meritorious. "Remember," said the successor of the Prophet to the chiefs of the Syrian army, "that you are always in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment and the hope of paradise. Avoid injustice and oppression, consult with your brethren and study to preserve the love and confidence of your troops. When you fight the battles of the Lord acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs, but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy no palm trees nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries and propose to themselves to serve God in that way, let them alone, and neither kill them or destroy their monasteries." This is neither a bad exposition of the laws of war or of the principles of Christianity.

As far back in the history of our race as four hundred years B. C. the great Xenophon, in the Cyropedia, puts in the mouth of his hero Cyrus, the Prince of Persia, an order directing that his army, when marching upon the enemy's borders, should not disturb the cultivators of the soil. Now let us draw the contrast in the conduct of General Sherman and the Arab chieftain who denied Christianity

and the old Greek pagan who had never heard of Christ. Let us take no Southern man's testimony; there are plenty of honest and truthful soldiers of the Union, who were with the Federal army and served in its ranks, to tell all we want and more. This is what one of them says, writing of that campaign to the "Detroit Free Press:" "One of the most devilish acts of Sherman's campaign was the destruction of Marietta. * * * The Military Institute and such mills and factories as might be a benefit to Hood could expect the torch, but Sherman was not content with that; the torch was applied to everything, even to the shanties occupied by the colored people. No advance warning was given. The first alarm was followed by the crackling of flames. Soldiers rode from house to house, entered without ceremony and kindled fires in garrets and closets, and stood by to see that they were not extinguished."

Again he says: "Had one been able to climb to such a height at Atlanta as to enable him to see for forty miles around, the day Sherman marched out, he would have been appalled at the destruction. Hundreds of houses had been burned, every rod of fence destroyed, nearly every fruit tree cut down, and the face of the country so changed that one born in that section could scarcely recognize it. The vindictiveness of war would have trampled the very earth out of sight had such a thing been possible."

Again he says: "At the very opening of the campaign at Dalton the Federal soldiery had received encouragement to become vandals. Not one private soldier out of every forty turned robber and incendiary, but there were enough to cast a stigma on the whole. From Dalton to Atlanta every house was entered a dozen times over, and each new band of foragers robbed it of something. When there was nothing in the shape of money, provisions, jewelry or clothing left the looters destroyed furniture, abused women and children, and ended by setting fire to the house. As these parties rode back to camp attired in dresses and bonnets and exhibiting the trophies of their raid, and nothing was said to them, others were encouraged to follow suit. The

treatment of colored women was brutal in the extreme, and not a few of them died from the effects. One who has the nerve to sit down and listen to what they can tell will find his respect for the ignorant and savage Indians increased. But these were preparatory lessons. When Sherman cut loose from Atlanta *everybody* had license to throw off restraint and make Georgia "drain the bitter cup." "The Federal who wants to learn what it was to license an army to become vandals should mount a horse at Atlanta and follow Sherman's route for fifty miles. He can hear stories from the lips of women that would make him ashamed of the flag that waved over him as he went into battle. When the army had passed nothing was left but a trail of desolation and despair. No house escaped robbery; no woman escaped insult; no building escaped the fire-brand except by some strange interposition. War may license an army to subsist on the enemy, but civilized warfare stops at live stock, forage and provisions; it does not enter the houses of the sick and helpless and rob women of finger-rings and carry off their clothing.

Add to all these horrors that most merciless and inhuman order of expatriation, by which the entire population of Atlanta, of all ages, sexes and conditions, were driven forth to the fields of a desolated country, or shipped off to the rear like cattle; an order which was followed by the "deliberate burning of Atlanta" by Sherman's own account. But I have said enough about these horrors, for it is exceedingly unpleasant to speak of them. Yet they must be told, if for nothing else than to excite the execration of humane people, and they will be told more hereafter than ever before. It is not worth while to cry hush. The truth is entitled to be made known.

Let us resume. We left the operations of the military with General Sherman in possession of what was left of Fayetteville. Hampton and Hardee had crossed the Cape Fear and destroyed the bridge. The forces available to meet the enemy, according to General Johnston, were about five thousand men of the Army of

Tennessee, and the troops in the department of North and South Carolina, amounting to about eleven thousand more. These were in different parts of the country, and were not concentrated until several days afterwards, owing to several causes, and many of them were unarmed. A few days before, on the 7th of March, General Bragg, commanding the troops in the department of North Carolina, with Major Generals D. H. Hill and R. F. Hoke, and a remnant of Clayton's division of the Western army, attacked Major General Cox, who was advancing towards Goldsboro' from New Berne with three divisions. The engagement took place near Kingston, with considerable success on the Confederate side. The enemy was driven back three miles, with a loss of 1,500 prisoners, and quite a number of killed and wounded.

On the next day the Confederate forces fell back to Goldsboro. General Sherman made his way steadily from Fayetteville towards Goldsboro, where he was to make a junction with General Schofield. The cavalry under Generals Hampton and Butler and Wheeler hung around his flank and front, impeding and annoying his march as much as possible. A sharp engagement took place at Averasboro, and a still more considerable one at Bentonville, in which the Confederates were again successful, against overwhelming numbers. In fact, General Joseph E. Johnston, a sharp observer of men and armies, gives it as his opinion that the life of plunder and license indulged in by Sherman's men had already worked its legitimate results upon them, and that they did not fight with near the efficiency and steadiness which characterized them on their entrance into the State of Georgia. This affair at Bentonville was the last considerable engagement of the war, and was in some respects remarkable. There was not a man perhaps of the ten or twelve thousand men on the Confederate side who was not perfectly aware that the war was over, and that his fighting was hopeless; yet they scarcely ever fought better, maintaining the ground all day long against twice their numbers, or at least one-half of Sherman's army.

Again and again they drove them back over several miles, covering the ground with dead, and capturing nine hundred prisoners, whilst the enemy lost in killed and wounded about 4,000. The little Confederate force only fell back towards Smithfield when Sherman's whole army came up to push them from their position. Without further hostilities Sherman arrived in Goldsboro on the 23d of March, and effected his junction with Scofield. Their united force then exceeded 110,000 men. At Goldsboro he rested his troops, refitted and made his arrangements for the final operations.

The Confederate forces rested likewise near Smithfield, half-way between Goldsboro and Raleigh, repairing their losses and preparing as well as the exhausted means at hand would permit for the last struggle.

On the 10th of April, General Sherman put his troops in motion towards Raleigh, and as soon as informed thereof, General Johnston's troops began to fall back slowly before him. I was then Governor of the State of North Carolina. Being aware of the situation from daily communication with the Confederate Generals, I had already shipped away westward the principal military stores of the State, together with the most necessary archives of the various departments. About the 10th and 11th of April painful rumors, were throughout the capital in confidential circles of the surrender of General Lee. Animated by these reports and also by the fact that the Confederate forces were passing through and rapidly uncovering the capital of the State, and that all further operations were really intended to secure such terms as were possible, I consulted General Johnston as to what it was best for me to do. With the frankness of a soldier and a man of common sense, he advised me to make the best terms I could for the protection of my capital and people. I spoke to him about the propriety of sending an embassy through his lines to meet General Sherman. Very soon thereafter he went west to meet President Davis at Greensboro, leaving the command to General Hardee, with whom I likewise had a conference, and who gave me the permit to send the embassy.

I appointed ex-Governor Wm. A. Graham and ex-Governor David L. Swain, commissioners to visit General Sherman, and gave to them a letter to him requesting that he would grant protection to the Capital, and stating that these gentlemen were authorized to treat with him for that purpose. A copy of that letter, as it appears, was not entered on my official letter-book, and I have not been able to obtain it; but that was its purport, to save the Capital, the archives, etc. Dr. Edward Warren, surgeon-general of the State, Col. James G. Burr, of Wilmington, an officer of the State Guards, and Major John Devereaux, of my staff, accompanied the commissioners as an escort. Leaving Raleigh in a special train with a flag of truce, they passed through the rear guard of the Confederate army, commanded by General Hampton; but before they got within the Federal lines they were stopped by a dispatch from General Johnston, and ordered to return to Raleigh. This order was delivered by General Hampton in person, and obeying it, they reversed the engine and started on the return. But meanwhile, the enemy's troops being in motion, had swept by them on the dirt roads, and suddenly they found themselves halted by Kilpatrick's cavalry, and made prisoners. The result was that they were taken to Sherman's headquarters, the place to which they had started. There their errand was discharged, and the promised protection given in letters directed to me, and orders issued to his command.

When starting from Raleigh it was supposed they would be able to return by four o'clock at the latest. It was extremely important that they should return at that time, for the city of Raleigh was to be completely uncovered that night and the remaining of the Governor and all State officers in the discharge of their duties depended on the reply which was expected from General Sherman. Of course they could not remain with the certain assurance of capture, which would have been equivalent to the suspension of all the functions of government; but for some reason Sherman saw proper to detain the Commissioners

and their engine until next morning. He had been informed of the countermanding of their permit and no doubt thought that he obtained some advantage by detaining them and keeping me in suspense. No doubt, also, as I have been informed, that he utilized my engine by making it ply all night between his camp and Goldsboro. Meantime it had been reported to me that the Commissioners and their engine had been captured, and I had ceased to expect their return. At precisely midnight, accompanied by two volunteer aids, I rode upon horseback out of the city of Raleigh, leaving it occupied by the rear guard of Hampton's Cavalry, and stopped eight miles from the city in the camp of General Hoke, commanding a North Carolina Division. The other State officers had previously retired to Greensboro. The Commissioners arrived next morning in Raleigh, took possession of the State House in my absence, and made all arrangements for the protection of the city in accordance with the promise of Sherman. Soon after, one of them, Governor Graham, undertook to go forward towards Hillsboro and deliver to me the letters and orders of General Sherman, but owing to the difficulty of getting horses and to the fact that the roads were swarming with Federal and Confederate cavalry engaged in constant skirmishing, Governor Graham did not overtake me until Friday evening at his own house in Hillsboro.

With an account of the result of his mission, Governor Graham also informed me of the official intelligence of Lee's surrender, and put in my hands an invitation from Sherman to return to Raleigh, which I declined to accept. I had whilst at Hillsboro' received an urgent despatch from President Davis, asking me to meet him in Greensboro'. This I desired to do, as well as to confer with General Johnston, who was there also. On Saturday morning, therefore, I sat out on horseback from Hillsboro' to join President Davis. On arriving at Greensboro' I found that he and the members of the Cabinet with him had gone on to Charlotte. I followed on, and had an interview with the President in the presence of Mr. Reagan, General

Breckinridge, and one or more members of his cabinet beside. I told him I had come to him to advise with him what to do, and to learn his further intentions. The conversation was long and solemn. Mr. Davis appeared still full of hope, and discussed the situation exhaustively. He told me of the possibility, as he thought, of retreating beyond the Mississippi with large sections of the soldiers still faithful to the Confederate cause, and resuming operations with General Kirby Smith's forces as a nucleus in those distant regions; and intimated rather than expressed a desire that I should accompany him, with such of the North Carolina troops as I might be able to influence to that end. He was very earnest, and displayed a remarkable knowledge of the opinions and resources of the people of the Confederacy, as well as a most dauntless spirit. After he had ceased there was a sad silence around his council board. Perhaps one or more opinions were expressed in support of Mr. Davis's views, and then General Breckenridge spoke. I shall never forget either the language or the manner of that splendid Kentuckian. With the utmost frankness, and with the courage of sincerity, he said he did not think they were dealing candidly with Governor Vance; that their hopes of accomplishing the results set forth by Mr. Davis were so remote and uncertain that he, for his part, could not advise me to forsake the great duties which devolved upon me in order to follow the further fortunes of the retreating Confederacy; that his advice would be that I should return to my position and its responsibilities, do the best I could for my people, and share their fate, whatever it might be. With a deep sigh Mr. Davis replied to General Breckenridge: "Well, perhaps, General, you are right." I remarked that General Breckenridge's views coincided with my own sense of duty, and after a very little more conversation I arose and offered my hand to President Davis to bid him good-bye. He shook it long and warmly, saying: "God bless you, sir, and the noble old State of North Carolina." With feelings which I am not able to describe I thus bade fare-

well to the Southern Confederacy and returned to Greensboro', with the intention of going to Raleigh and resuming my duties as governor, if permitted.

On the evening of the 17th, hearing that negotiations were being entered into between Johnston and Sherman for a final surrender, I left Greensboro to accompany General Breckinridge and Postmaster-General Reagan in a freight car to go to General Hampton's headquarters, where General Johnston was. Arriving there (a few miles east of Hillsboro) between midnight and daybreak, a conference was held in regard to the proposed meeting with Sherman. I did not participate in that conference, but next morning about sunrise I was awakened by General Breckinridge, who took me out of the house and informed me of the result of the conference, and further gave me confidentially the startling news of Mr. Lincoln's assassination, which General Johnston had the night before received confidentially from General Sherman. By both sides it was deemed of the highest importance that this information should be kept secret until the negotiations were terminated. As soon as possible thereafter I obtained a horse and rode back into Hillsboro to consult with Governor Graham on the alarming aspects of the situation. That evening I returned again to Greensboro, and the following morning learned of the terms which were given by General Sherman to General Johnston for the surrender of his army. As is known, this agreement was disapproved by the authorities in Washington, and a very different one was finally adopted. The first provided not only for the surrender and security of the military arm of the Confederacy, but for the full and complete recognition of the existing autonomy of the States, merely requiring that the various State officers should attorn to the government of the United States, taking the usual oaths of office to support the Constitution, &c. The latter provided only for the surrender of men and property of the Confederate Army. Because I have been severe in my denunciations of the conduct of General Sherman and his army towards unarmed and helpless citizens, I have no

disposition to refuse him justice when I think he really merits it. In my opinion one of the wisest and most far-seeing measures connected with the war was this first convention offered by General Sherman. It was as generous as it was wise. It has perhaps never been rated at its true value by people either North or South.

To show its high statesmanlike character it is only necessary to say that had it been ratified at Washington the authorities of every State in the late Confederacy would have at once sworn allegiance to the constitution of the United States, the courts and the laws of the Federal Government would have immediately resumed their sway, and the dominion of the Union would have been complete at once; greatest result of all, there would have been no such thing as *reconstruction*; no such thing as eleven States reduced to military districts, with all civil authority overthrown and the bayonet become due process of law. There would have been no such thing as eleven blood-stained, war-ridden and desolated States plundered of two hundred and sixty millions by the last and infinitely worse invasion of the army of carpet-baggers. In short, when I say that the terms offered us by General Sherman would have saved the South the horrors of reconstruction, I have said all that human eloquence is capable of saying; and I feel much inclined to forgive General Sherman the horrors which he did inflict in consideration of his efforts to avert those which came afterwards.

Concluding to return to Raleigh and resume my duties as Governor, under the terms of the first convention, I soon learned of its disapproval, and that my invitation had been withdrawn. At length the second and final convention was agreed to, and on General Schofield's arrival in Greensboro, to receive the surrender of Johnston's little army, which took place about two miles west of the town of Durham on the Hillsboro road, I went to that officer and offered to surrender myself. He declined to accept my surrender, but told me I was at liberty to go home.

General Johnston's army having surrendered, as soon as information could be conveyed to the detachments of either army in different parts of the State, hostilities ceased, and the war between the States, begun more than four years before, came to an end.

Of course, the limits of an address like this have compelled me to take but a brief glance at many things of sufficient importance to demand more detail. Many incidents of interest I have had to omit altogether. Of the scenes of demoralization of both armies in the closing hours of the confederacy's existence, it pains me to think much more to speak. The stores of the State of North Carolina were ruthlessly plundered, mostly, I grieve to say, by Southern soldiers; not North Carolinians. Efforts to protect them proved utterly unavailing, without a considerable flow of blood, and that I was unwilling to see shed—deeming the lives of brave men, though demoralized ones, worth more than all the treasures which the State had accumulated. The extent of these stores is perhaps not generally known; and yet, a knowledge of them, as well as of the number of troops she sent into the field will alone enable the historian to do justice to her patriotism, courage and resources.

By the general industry and thrift of our people and by the use of a number of blockade-running steamers carrying out cotton and bringing in supplies from Europe I had collected and distributed from time to time, as near as can be gathered from the records of the Quarter-Master's Department, the following stores: Large quantities of machinery supplies, 60,000 pairs of handcards, 10,000 grain scythes, 200 bbls. blue stone for the wheat growers, leather and shoes for 250,000 pairs, 50,000 blankets, gray woolen cloth for at least 250,000 suits of uniforms, 12,000 overcoats (ready made), 2,000 best Enfield rifles, (with 100 rounds of fixed ammunition), 100,000 pounds bacon, 500 sacks of coffee for hospital use, \$50,000 worth of medicines at gold prices, large quantities of lubricating oils, beside minor supplies of various kinds for the charitable institutions of the State. Not only was the supply of shoes, blankets and clothing more

than sufficient for the supply of the North Carolina troops, but large quantities were turned over to the Confederate Government for the troops of other States. In the winter succeeding the battle of Chickamauga, I sent to General Longstreet's corps 14,000 suits of clothing complete. At the surrender of General Johnston, the State had on hand, ready made and in cloth, 92,000 suits of uniform, with great stores of blankets, leather, &c. To make good the warrants on which these purchases had been made abroad, the State purchased and had on hand in trust for the holders 11,000 bales of cotton and 100,000 barrels of rosin. The cotton was partly destroyed before the war closed, the remainder, amounting to several thousand bales, was *captured* after peace was declared by certain officers of the Federal Army.

In addition to these supplies brought in from abroad, immense quantities of bacon, beef, flour and corn were furnished from our own fields. * * * Any one acquainted with the valley of the Roanoke and the black alluvial lowlands of Eastern North Carolina, will recognize what they can do in the production of corn when actively cultivated. And they and all the lands of this State were actively cultivated for the production of food. I was told by General Joseph E. Johnston that when his army was surrendered, he had in the depots in North Carolina, gathered in the State, five months' supplies for sixty thousand men, and that for many many months previous, General Lee's army had been almost entirely fed from North Carolina. In relation to the number of troops furnished to the Confederate Government, I have more than once made the boast that North Carolina furnished not *relatively*, but *absolutely* more than any other State. This assertion has not yet been denied to my knowledge. The official records of the Adjutant-General's office, show that North Carolina furnished troops as follows:

As Volunteers at outset.....	64,636	
Recruited by Volunteers from time to time.....	21,608	
Recruited by Conscripts.....	18,585	
In all, Regular Troops from N. C.....	—	104,829
Regular Troops in the State Service.....	3,203	
Militia on Home Duty.....	2,962	
Junior Reserves, Confederate Service....	4,217	
Senior Reserves, Confederate Service....	5,686	
Troops from N. C. in Regiments in other States.....	3,103	
Grand Total of all Grades.....	—	121,038

These were organized into 71 regiments, 20 battalions and 24 unattached companies. All these were raised out of a white population, in 1860, of 629,942, or one soldier to every six souls! At Appomattox and at Greensboro' North Carolina surrendered twice as many muskets as any other State. Her dead on the battle-fields of Virginia, in the majority of cases, was twice as great as those from any other State, and in more than one of Lee's great battles they exceeded the dead from all the other States put together.

This record constitutes a proof of a very proud distinction, but it is due to North Carolina as sure as truth is truth. In my opinion she was less exhausted when the end came than any other State, and she had the *means* and *vitality* and the *spirit* to have continued the struggle two years longer, if she had been supported. The last to begin the fight, she was the last to leave it! Let not these things be forgotten.

A great many incidents might be told of those days that would well repay the telling—grave and gay, pathetic and ludicrous. During a hurried trip from Raleigh to Salisbury a few months before the close of the war we were stopped a few miles beyond Greensboro by an engine in the ditch in the centre of a deep cut. The weather was wet and the mud off the cross-ties was deep. I and the other passengers were compelled to get off the train going west, climb the bank of the cut and walk around to board

another train beyond the disabled one which blocked the way. That train which we were to take had brought down a large lot of Federal prisoners from Salisbury. In trying to ascend the bank I had great difficulty, and finally halted near the top, unable to proceed. Suddenly a dirty, emaciated Yankee soldier on the top of the bank above me laid down and extended his hand to my assistance with a polite, "Allow me, sir," pulled me up to the top. I thanked him, and, calling to my servant, gave him the remnant in my lunch basket and all that was left of a bottle of new apple brandy, that sole consoler of Southern hopes at that time.

Half starved as he was, he gave a fair shout of joy and inquired my name, which I gave him. Of course, I never expected to hear of him again—but I did. It proved to be both bread and brandy cast upon the waters. When my native town of Ashville was captured about the very time of Johnston's surrender, that same boy turned up in the ranks of its Federal captors, sought out my widowed mother's house, which was in the suburbs and much exposed, and guarded it from intrusion, like a watch dog, sleeping in the porch before her door.

When Johnston's army was falling back through Raleigh, a battallion of junior reserves composed of seventeen year old boys from South Carolina passed through. Like all others, they wanted something to eat, and although the army had more provisions than it could remove from Raleigh, they invaded private houses everywhere, clamorous for food. Two delicate looking lads walked into the door of the executive mansion and asked to be served; my family had gone westward and there was no one in the house but myself and two servants, and they were broken down with cooking, and almost everything in the house was exhausted besides. I explained all this to them and with some impatience told them they must go to the quartermaster, who would be only too willing to furnish them. With a charming impudence they quickly sat down, and looking up at me, one of them said: "Mister, that's the way we always told the soldiers at our house, but they

always got something to eat before they left, anyhow." That boy was well fed before *he* left!

After receiving General Schofield's permit to return to my home I gathered together all my remaining personal possessions in the world, the spoils of four years of war, including my rights in the territories, consisting of a saddle-horse, a wagon and a pair of old mules, and shipped them in a freight car, and with a few friends took passage in the same elegant conveyance towards the mountains. The cars and highways were alike filled with the disbanded soldiers. At every depot where we halted *more* crowded in and upon the trains. It was with the greatest difficulty I could keep them from crowding me out of my freight box; their repeated attempts to do so had irritated me exceedingly. Finally, at one stopping place, I saw a boy attempting to climb through a hole that had been knocked in the side of the car to admit air. I stor.ned at him to get back; he crawled on; I jerked my navy repeater out of its holster and threatened to shoot him if he didn't go back; he crawled on and dropped on the floor of the car with the utmost unconcern, and quietly said, "you don't look like you'd shoot!" My friends laughed, my anger passed and the brave, impudent fellow got a ride. But I must close. I thank you, and bid you all good-bye.

Gaylord Bros.
Makers
Syracuse, N. Y.
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